

Azkaban

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Summary: Isn't the title original? Just a short fic, my first attempt at HP. BTW, not a Sirius fic.. s'about Hagrid, written before GoF so a little out of sync. Sorry about that. x_x;

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****_Azkaban_****

Okay, I got an idea for this a long time ago, and it kept bugging me until I wrote it down. It didn't turn out as good as I'd hoped, but this is my first HP fic, so go easy on me. Still, flames are welcome - I just want some feedback. ^^'; Thanks. And everyone who reviewed my poem, thank you soo much! I really appreciate it.

Oh, and I don't write Hagrid's character well, so if he seems a bit OOC, I tried. Sorry..

Disclaimer: Rubeus Hagrid, Tom Riddle, Cornelius Fudge, and everything else in this fic belongs to the wonderful Ms. JK Rowling. Nothing belongs to me. Please dont sue me..

~*~

Rubeus stood over the freshly dug grave, his beard drenched with tears as they rolled down his face. He couldn't remember how long he had been standing there, but the ceremony had ended hours ago, and all the mourners had drifted off. They'll return to their lives, thought Rubeus, and mine will stay shattered. It's not fair. He wiped his eyes with a giant hand and turned at last from the grave.

He couldn't believe his father was actually gone. He couldn't be! After the all the years he had consoled him and took pride in him, he was gone. It was too heavy a thought to carry.

Some nagging voice inside him kept telling him something wasn't

right. A sense of recognition crept over Rubeus as he made his way out of the graveyard. Hadn't this happened before? His thoughts drifted and he forgot where he was and what he was doing there.

Fresh tears blurred his eyes as he walked, dampening the images around him until they were nothing but color. Color that swirled and surrounded him and made him even more miserable than before. From the colors formed a new image, and a new wave of guilt and misery passed over him. He knew this place.

He was walking along a corridor near the Potion's classroom in Hogwarts. He was carrying a large box in his arms, though he wasn't sure why. He found himself counting the doors, and then ducking into a deserted classroom.

Rubeus had seen all of this before. He knew something was wrong. Something told him he had done all of this before, and that it hadn't ended right. A sense of dread crept over him. Shaking his head to clear his thoughts, he pulled open a closet door in the back of the room.

He reached out into the darkness and his hand met something furry. Eight eyes gleamed out from the pitch-black closet. Rubeus couldn't help but smile at his "adorable" pet. "There's a good spider." He set the box down and took off the lid. He tried to usher the giant arachnid into the overturned box.

"Into the box, now, Aragog. There's been an attack, and I've got tah get yeh outta here before they suspect yer the one who did it. Come on, now." He pulled on one of the spider's legs, barely moving him. He seemed hesitant to leave the dark closet.

Getting impatient, Rubeus spoke in a hoarse, nervous whisper. "C'mon... gotta get yeh outta here... C'mon now... in the box..."

His coaxing was interrupted by a cold, sharp voice behind him in the doorway. "Evening, Rubeus." Panicking, Rubeus slammed the door shut and stood in front of the box, trying to hide it behind him. He winced at the whimpers of pain coming from the closet.

Slowly, Rubeus made out the shape of the silhouette in the doorway. Shocked at the appearance of the Slytherin prefect, he gasped out nervously. "What yer doin' down here, Tom?"

Tom Riddle stepped into the room, peering around Rubeus to get a look at what he was hiding. At the sound of his footsteps, scratching and whimpering drifted out from the closet. Rubeus leaned back on the door and swallowed hard. Tom spoke up.

"It's all over," he drawled in his cold, suspecting tone of voice. "I'm going to have to turn you in, Rubeus." Rubeus started to blink rapidly, leaning all his weight against the door where Aragog was trying to get out. "They're talking about closing Hogwarts if the attacks don't stop."

Rubeus was confused. He had kept a close watch on Aragog.. hadn't he? "What d'yeh-"

"I don't think you meant to kill anyone," Tom continued, ignoring Rubeus. Alarms were going off in his head, something from deep inside his mind was telling him this had already happened, and had turned out terribly wrong. He tried to ignore it as Tom drawled on. "But monsters don't make good pets. I suppose you let it out just for exercise and-"

His anger rose over the nagging feeling in his mind and Rubeus roared at his accuser. "It never killed no one!" The door started banging against his hinges, and Rubeus leaned harder. Loud clicking and rustling noises joined the scratching and whimpering.

The colors around him blurred once more and Rubeus closed his eyes and leaned his weight against the door. The light from Tom's spell and the pain from the door were mixed into the colors swirling around his head, and then Rubeus found himself standing in Headmaster Dippet's office as if he had been there a few minutes.

Dippet was speaking to him, a stern look on his face. The sense of recognition was creeping back. "...so I think it is for the good of the school if this monster was executed." Rubeus jumped in surprise.

"Executed?! Sir-"

"Not another word, Hagrid. And as for your punishment, detention is out of the question. Your monster has killed a student, Hagrid. Expulsion to be effective immediately."

Rubeus's head was spinning. He'd never be able to graduate and use magic freely. And Aragog hadn't done anything. He glanced around the office for some way out and noticed Tom Riddle watching, with a blank expression on his face.

Tom's face blurred, and once more the images around Rubeus faded and swirled around him like mist. Before he could figure out where he was he was seated in his cottage, 50 years older.

He dried his eyes on the sleeve of his robe and opened the door. Looking up into the night sky, he watched the waning moon creep over the Astronomy tower of Hogwarts. Against the light of the moon he could barely make out the shape of broomsticks, carrying away his pet dragon. Now he knew for sure he was gone. He felt like he was drowning in his own pain and suffering.

Just as he was about to call out for them to come back, the world around him shattered. A sharp, cracking sound filled his ears and he woke up on a stiff bed, chained to a wall of a prison cell.

Looking around, Rubeus realized where he was; it didn't comfort him. At first he thought the ranting screams from the prisoners had woken him, but with a start he realized a nearby Dementor was opening the lock on his cell. He was struck with fear; what if they had come to perform the kiss?

From behind the Dementors stepped Cornelius Fudge. He had a guilty and embarrassed expression on his face, and nodded to Hagrid before speaking. His voice came out cracked; he looked pale, but perhaps that had something to do with the Dementors looming over him.

"Hagrid, there was a - uhm - mistake.. with the judgment made on the matter of the attacks at Hogwarts. Dumbledore has informed me that the attacker has been taken care of and that the attacks have stopped." Rubeus would have been relieved, if he could. "We're letting you out of Azkaban, now that we know you are innocent."

Rubeus just nodded. He couldn't see how Hogwarts would be any better than Azkaban - his reputation was ruined. Everyone would suspect him of something there. The Dementors hesitantly stood aside as he passed through, following Fudge.

As soon as he had left the grounds, though, he felt as though a weight had been lifted from his shoulders. He couldn't help but smile as his memories came rushing back like a tidal wave. When he had gotten the letter to come to Hogwarts, his first few years at school, staying on as keeper of the keys, all the happy events flooded back into his memory. Finally, he was out of Azkaban.

~MD, 6-10-2k

End
file.